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25 October 1954

MEMORANDUM TO: Assistant Director, Current Intelligence

FROM: Acting Chief, Soviet Staff

SUBJECT: Primary Responsibility for Notification to Various Government Agencies in Case of an Overt Hostile Act Involving the United States

REFERENCE: Memorandum of 8 October 1954 to AD/CI from Chief, PPC/DDP and attachments thereto

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1. One of the attachments to the reference memorandum is an Annex B (basic document not available) prepared by the Joint Subsidiary Plans Division of the Joint Staff. This Annex B recommends that CIA have an SOP concerning the notification to various government agencies in case of an overt hostile act involving the United States. Annex B and its implications have been discussed with Messrs. [REDACTED] and, later, with the DAD/CI, and it was finally agreed that it was not a simple question of CIA agreeing to take on this responsibility but rather that this proposal was merely one facet of the complicated and at present inadequate alerting mechanism in Washington.

2. Present CIA responsibility is set forth under NSCID as paragraph 6 which is given below in its entirety:

"Whenever any member of the Intelligence Advisory Committee obtains information that indicates an impending crisis situation, such as the outbreak of hostilities involving the United States, or a condition which affects the security of the United States to such an extent that immediate action or decision on the part of the President or the National Security Council seems to be required, he shall immediately furnish the information to the other members of the Intelligence Advisory Committee as well as to other officials or agencies as may be indicated by the circumstances. The Director of Central Intelligence shall immediately convene the Intelligence Advisory Committee. After receiving the views of the Intelligence Advisory Committee members, the Director of Central Intelligence shall promptly prepare and disseminate the national intelligence estimate in accordance with paragraphs 4 and 5 above."

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Agency Regulations regarding the function of the CIA Watch Office ensure the carrying out of the first part of paragraph 6 whenever CIA receives information regarding "an impending crisis situation". It should be noted that there is some doubt as to whether the case of an overt hostile act involving the United States which has actually occurred comes under the "impending crisis situation" category.

3. It is our understanding that at present responsibility for alerting officials and agencies outside the IAC in the case of a hostile overt act involving the United States is not clearly determined inasmuch as apparently one set of rules pertains to notification in case of an air attack whereas other rules pertain in the case NATO is involved, the latter being covered under NSC 116. It is further understood that NSC 116 has come up for revision with a view to broadening its coverage from the present NATO context.

4. According to the reference memorandum the JSPD of the Joint Staff merely requested informally the CIA reaction with regard to the proposed Annex B. It is believed that the Annex B proposal may have been conceived in a relative vacuum in JSPD of the Joint Staff and accordingly does not necessarily represent any agreed upon proposal by the three services.

5. It is considered that the Watch Committee and the National Indications Center are in no position to operate as an alerting mechanism in the case of an overt hostile act involving the United States which has actually taken place. However, the Watch Committee and the National Indications Center would certainly be among the recipients of such information and would carry out their own special responsibility in due course.

6. It is recommended in view of the above that the reference memorandum and attachments thereto be forwarded to the Special Assistant to the Director for Planning and Coordination for such action as might be desirable at a higher policy level.



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8 October 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Primary Responsibility for Notification to  
Various Government Agencies in Case of an  
Overt Hostile Act Involving the United States

REFERENCE: The attached file.

1. The action item in this file was received by this Staff from the Joint Subsidiary Plans Division of the Joint Staff with an informal request for information on the matter represented.

2. This Office feels that the OCI is the proper element for action required and refers accordingly. For such use to you as it may be, I attach also a memorandum prepared to pose the matter to DDCI, PPC signature now withdrawn in the light of this reference to you.

3. If you will inform me of your conclusions, I will be pleased to convey answer accordingly to the JSPD. If you require further information on this matter, contact [REDACTED] DC/PPC, extension [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
Chief, Planning and  
Program Coordination Staff

Att:

- (1) TS# 105149, cy 1
- (2) TS# 105150, cy 1

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5 OCT 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : Primary Responsibility for Notification to  
Various Government Agencies in Case of an  
Overt Hostile Act Involving the United States

1. Recent correspondence (Enclosure 1) from the Joint Subsidiary Plans Division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff forwards a JCS proposal that CIA has the primary responsibility for notification of a listed group of agencies in the event of an "overt hostile act involving the United States". Since, under the provisions of Para 6, NSCID 1, the Director of Central Intelligence is charged with the responsibility of convening the IAC whenever information is received by any member indicating imminence of hostilities, it is logical for the JCS to make this proposal.

2. NSCID 1, Para 5a, charges the DCI with the dissemination of all National Intelligence to the members of the NSC. All of the governmental agencies listed in Enclosure 1 ("Annex B") are members of the NSC or are controlled in time of emergency by a member of the NSC. DCID 1/2 provides for the establishment of a National Indications Center as a staff for the Watch Committee. This Watch Committee and its staff, the National Indications Center, through their membership, will provide for notification of all agencies listed except those falling under the jurisdiction of the Office of Defense Mobilization. While not specifically written into the functions of the Watch Committee, it is assumed that matters concerning an overt hostile act involving the United States would be handled in the same manner as matters giving an indication of an impending crisis.

3. This matter is mentioned to give you an opportunity to confirm or reject our assumption. I will inform the JSPD accordingly.

4. The fact that this question has been raised indicates the possibility that other quarters may also lack clear understanding on this aspect. For your consideration, it is suggested that you may wish to take the question up as a Watch Committee matter. The purpose would be to insure clear understanding that an overt hostile act is procedurally the same as any indication and involves the same obligations of IAC members to notify other member agencies, as provided by NSCID 1, Para 6.

*Signature Witham*

*By Sign -*

*E/KD*

Chief, Planning and Program  
Coordination Staff

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1 Enclosure: (w/orig only)

Annex B (listed in Para 1)

**Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt**

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